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ABSTRACT

This report documents the proceedings of a regional policy seminar hosted by the Iowa Department of Education with support from the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) and the Midwest Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities (MRC). The seminar, "Safe Schools Within Safe Communities," was held on September 19-20, 1995, in Des Moines, Iowa. Participants from 10 states attended--Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The purpose of the seminar was to provide a working forum where states could share information about existing violence-prevention policies, legislation, resources, successes, and state initiatives. Each state was asked to form a team to develop a long-range, coordinated, state-policy agenda and action plan for safe schools. The document contains highlights of a speech by Robert H. Brown, Jr., Chief of the Crime Prevention Branch, Office of Justice Programs, in which he addressed the future of school/community partnerships with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. William Modzelksi, Director of Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program, U.S. Department of Education, described the future of that program. Information on Minnesota's Plan, Unlearning Violence, is included, as well as highlights of the state goals developed during the action planning session. A list of contact organizations is included. A sidebar contains information on the Gun-Free School Act of 1994. (LMI)

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Policy Briefs

October 1995 Special Report

"Safe Schools Within Safe Communities: A Regional Summit in the Heartland"

Des Moines, Iowa . . . The Heartland of America where Routes 80 and 35 cross and converge. . . and also where things tend to make sense.

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By
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Carol Sullivan

A Publication of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory
and the Midwest Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities

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Special Policy Report

"Safe Schools Within Safe Communities: A Regional Summit in the Heartland"

The following Special Policy Report documents the proceedings of a regional policy seminar hosted by the Iowa Department of Education with support from the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) and the Midwest Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities (MRC). The seminar, "Safe Schools Within Safe Communities," was held on September 19-20, 1995, in Des Moines, Iowa. Ten states were involved in the seminar, including Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The seminar was convened to provide a working forum where states could share information about existing violence prevention policies, legislation, resources, success stories, and state initiatives. This information, along with the most current information on the federal perspective on school safety policies and a policy planning strategy, was the focus of the seminar. Each state was asked to form a team representing key state agencies, law enforcement, and Governor's staff. Their charge was to develop a long-range, coordinated state policy agenda and action plan for safe schools. In addition to the state teams, Iowa also brought in regional teams to focus on developing plans for regional meetings in Iowa on school/community safety.

Connie Hofer of South Dakota takes advantage of the variety of violence prevention materials made available during the policy seminar.

A Partnership In The Making

The United States Department of Justice reaches out to local schools and communities in an effort of building collaborative partnerships.

Robert H. Brown, Jr., Chief of the Crime Prevention Branch, Office of Justice Programs, was a keynote speaker at the NCREL-sponsored "Safe Schools Within Safe Communities" seminar on September 19, 1995. in Des Moines, Iowa. The following are excerpts from Mr. Brown's presentation focusing on the future trend of school/community partnerships with the Bureau of Justice.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance is an arm of the Office of Justice. This office is composed of the Office for Victims of Crime, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the National Institute of Justice, which operates basically as a "think tank." The Bureau of Justice Assistance is the largest funding department within the Department of Justice. Last year the Bureau funded $450 million in state grant programs. These grants are formula grants, based on population, which go to states. Forty percent goes to local units of government. The funds can be utilized in a number of primary purpose areas.

The Eddie Burn Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Program is a program from which the Bureau grants this $450 million in appropriations with an additional $50 million in discretionary programs. An additional $12 million was granted last year pertaining to corrections options. It is important for those working in the field of prevention to know who administers these programs. Do you know who in your state distributes funds from the Burn Program? Who is the director of that program? What is the process for applying for these funds? When does your state conduct a poll as to what your criminal justice needs are? There is a lot of money out there, but you have to be aware of who distributes it and what the process is to access it. Unless your voice and the voice of your constituencies is heard, your chance of accessing these funds is very minimal. It is equally important to know if your state conducts public hearings or surveys. If it conducts surveys, who are the individuals being surveyed? When does your state submit its application to the Department of Justice for funding?

There is a lot of money out there, but you have to be aware of who distributes it and what the process is to access it. Unless your voice and the voice of your constituencies is heard, your chance of accessing these funds is very minimal.

Another piece of information that you should know is who sits on the Governor's Advisory Task Force. It is important to know who the Governor appoints to his or her task forces and how the decisions are made to spend these funds. For example, if 25 percent is going to go into multijuridical task forces, does that mean 40 percent will go into treatment? What about prevention? What about community partnerships? What about education? Remember that you are an integral component of a partnership with respect to law enforcement, the community, and the school. Unless your voice is heard, your chances of becoming funded are very minimal. It is vitally important, therefore, that you understand the process, know your contacts and educate the people who are the decisionmakers. Educate people like me. My phone number is (202) 616-3297 and I make myself available.

I believe the movement will be to see more of a partnership between the Justice's discretionary program and schools and communities, and that we will be supporting each other. We have not always done that well in the past, and in these times of dwindling funds, we must do a better job. You, who have a mission of working with our nation's schools, are the gatekeepers. While law enforcement is very important, it is teachers who spend the most time with our kids. It is the educational system, and, indeed, these kids, who are our future. We have to do a better job.

I believe the movement will be to see more of a partnership between the Justice's discretionary program and schools and communities and that we will be supporting each other.

In the census between 1973 and 1992, the victimization of black males ages 12–24 increased by 25 percent. Although women are less likely than men to be victimized in general, they are 10 times more likely then men to be victimized by their spouse, boyfriend, or ex-boyfriend. In 1992, 23 percent of all crimes in the United States were committed by juveniles. Youth were responsible for 9 percent of all murders, 12 percent of all aggravated assaults, 14 percent of forced rapes, 16 percent of robberies, 23 percent of larceny thefts, 22 percent of motor vehicle thefts, and 42 percent of all arson. In years past, law enforcement was a priority. It was the primary thrust to determine the road the funding issue would pursue with BJA. This year our number one priority is prevention, community, and kids.

You, who have a mission of working with our nation's schools, are the gatekeepers.

Through my office we have provided technical assistance that has nurtured police and community partnership programs. In building upon the past programs, this past year we implemented comprehensive mobilization programs in 16 cities throughout the United States. These programs are about community mobilization and community policing. We are working with education and looking at high-risk kids and basically pulling together all of the primary movers and shakers within the community—educators, police, city planners, social service agencies, and nonprofit organizations—to see how we can come together and create a plan. If we are going to do something that is going to be cost effective, we have got to pull together. We are going to continue to see violence prevention and community policing programs. In the next year you are going to see the Department of Justice making a sharp turn to work with its former agencies to see how we can put our funds together at the local level to promote comprehensive planning. Educators are a primary component of comprehensive planning.

Speaking From The Heart

Keynote speaker William Modzeleski, Director, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program, U.S. Department of Education, talks about the future of the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program.

It is great to be here in Iowa, the heartland. I read in a Des Moines newspaper this morning that Iowa is the heartland of America where things tend to make sense. It is interesting coming out here, because when I look at Washington, D.C., it is getting to be more of a place like out of a fairy tale, where up is down and down is up, red is green and green is white. Where even though you think you win, you lose; and when you lose, you win. Where children in schools and education, which should be the first in our priority list, are often last. Where prevention, although it has ten letters, is considered too often as a four-letter word. It is good to come out here where a steak is still a steak and a hamburger is still a hamburger. I think things make sense here.

I want to say what I really feel from the heart about the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program—about where we are going. And I don't mean those just in Washington, I mean all of us collectively, because this is not a problem that is going to be solved in Washington. This program has been in existence for six years. In that period of time there have been several billion dollars pumped into every state and almost every school district in this country to develop and implement drug prevention programs. We all have a stake in what is going on in Washington.

I want to set this in a little bit of context. We have all been asked as the kids come back to school to talk about what the prospects are for this school year as far as safety and drug use are concerned. Drug use and violence among youth are very much like the stock market—they go up and they go down. Unfortunately, they have remained very high over the past several years and all indications are that they will remain quite high.

Surveys confirm that drug use is going up and kids' attitudes concerning the harmfulness of drugs is going down. This is tough, because this means that we are going to have to change the behaviors of kids. We also know we are not going to see the end of homicides that occur in our schools. I think all of you know that when I talk about school associated homicides, this is the proverbial tip of the iceberg, and as catastrophic as they are and while we must plan for them, they don't happen every day.

There are things that happen every day that disrupt the overall school day in every part of the country and in rich and poor, small

The Gun-Free Schools Act

Recently, by a decision of 5-4, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a case that a federal law involving guns and schools was unconstitutional. This ruling has caused some confusion because the Congress had in fact passed two acts on the subject and the Supreme Court had ruled only one unconstitutional.

Educators should be aware, however, that Congress passed another law just last year similarly entitled the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. This law was a part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, which itself was part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Under this law, every state is required to have in effect by October 20, 1995, a state law requiring local educational agencies to expel from school any student found in possession of a gun. (An exception is made for students with disabilities under either the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These student can be expelled for only 45 days.) The state laws may also permit the local education agency's chief executive officer (presumably the superintendent) to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. This law is still in full effect.

and large, and rural and urban school districts. There are kids who bring guns into the school and there are kids who fight with each other and fight with teachers. Those are the kids who are disruptive. Those are the kids who generally create an atmosphere where teachers can't teach and parents are reluctant to send their kids to school. Kids are really fearful of going to school.

We know how to reduce and prevent drug use. We also know that these are complex problems, and solutions are not simple. We need resources and we need technical assistance and training. We need to use technology. We need leadership.

All of us know that there are programs out there. There are programs in Iowa, in Ohio, in Michigan, and in Illinois that really can prevent these incidents. We know how to stop violence. We know how to reduce and prevent drug use. We also know that these are complex problems, and solutions are not simple. We need resources and we need technical assistance and training. We need to use technology. We need leadership. We need research, evaluation, collaboration and coordination, and sharing information, and I could go on and on. This is what is needed to really solve what I think is one of the major problems in this country, especially as it relates to education.

Now, let's look at what is being proposed. Budget: The President recognized that one of the cornerstones of educational reform in this country is ensuring that kids go to schools that are safe, disciplined, and drug free. He, Secretary Riley, and others understand clearly that if you are a teacher, you cannot teach in a classroom if the kids are acting out. You cannot teach in a classroom if a kid is carrying a 9mm pistol. You cannot teach in a classroom room if kids are using drugs or are hung over from the night before. We need strong violence prevention and drug prevention programs—not merely programs that add more metal detectors or more law enforcement to a school. We need comprehensive programs.

Designing and developing comprehensive programs cost money and take time, leadership, and commitment. For these reasons, the President recommended $500 million for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program. The House of Representatives and the Senate recommended a 60 percent reduction to $200 million. They also recommended elimination of all national program activities. There is one body of congress that recommends the repeal of the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program folding it into a youth development block grant where schools will have to compete with other community groups for very limited dollars. Repealing the FACES (Family and Community Endeavors Program) program provided resources for after-school programs—programs that would allow kids to stay in school after 3:00 to continue their education and social and other recreational programs. There is also on the books a repeal of the majority of the other prevention programs that were part of the Violent Crime Reduction Act. That is how we are responding to issues of school crime and drug use in this country.

We need strong violence prevention and drug prevention programs—not merely programs that add more metal detectors or more law enforcement to a school. We need comprehensive programs.

Now what does that mean as we bring it down to a lower level? What does it mean for you? Generally, it means that fewer schools will be able to be served. Fewer schools will be able to receive funds. Fewer comprehensive programs will be able to be developed. Let me provide some examples. Illinois currently receives, on the 1995 revised appropriation, $18.8 million. Under

the bill that has passed in the House and the Senate, they would receive $8.6 million levels, a reduction of $10 million. I know our folks from Indiana are not here. Iowa, which currently receives $3.8 million, would receive $1.7 million, a reduction of $2 million. Kansas receives $3.6 million and would receive $1.7 million, another reduction close to $2 million. Michigan receives $17 million and would receive $9 million. Minnesota, which receives $6 million, would have a $2.9 million reduction. Missouri has $7.8 million, with a reduction of $3.5 million. Nebraska's $2.3 million would be reduced to $1 million. North Dakota receives $2.1 million and would receive $973,000. Ohio receives $17 million and they would receive $8 million. South Dakota receives $2 million and would receive $900,000. Wisconsin will receive $3 million, a decrease from $7.9 million.

These figures tell you that resources are going to be extremely limited for the programs that you design. You will not be able to serve the same number of kids and same number of schools and communities. I think the actions in the House and the Senate also mean that there is going to be little or no research in the areas of school violence. There are going to be few, if any, publications on violence and drug prevention. They are not going to be produced and they are not going to be disseminated. There is going to be very little support for programs with technological breakthroughs and issues in this area. There is going to be limited support for identification of funding for interagency agreements or ongoing discretionary grants. There is going to be no continued support for specialized technical assistance.

If these cuts are implemented, it does not mean that you can do nothing. Reduction of funds does not mean reduction of responsibilities. I want to make that clear, because I think it is extremely important to know that as we reduce the amount of funds, you are still going to be held responsible for programs such as the Gun Free Schools Act, the Pro-Children's Act, and other pieces of legislation that have come down over the past.

Let's talk for a moment about the Gun Free Schools Act. This act says that every state that receives what we call ESEA (Elementary and Secondary School Education) funding has to pass a law by October of this year mandating the expulsion of kids from school for not less than one year if they are caught bringing a gun to school. The President has sent an executive order to the Secretary saying, "I want this law implemented. This is important. We have to have guns out of school. Zero tolerance is one of the best ways of doing it. Implement the law."

"We don't want to focus on youth violence alone. That fragments youth from the community."

Don Streufert, Minnesota

Conference participants from Michigan ponder a plan of action for violence prevention in their state.

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"The most effective way to bring people together is at the local level. In doing this, people are most likely to share a common vision and go for it. To really buy into the concept of violence prevention, there must be some ownership."

Carol Thomas,
Minnesota

Representatives of each state work together in groups to develop action plans for violence prevention in their respective state.

We have been in the process of analyzing the various pieces of legislation of states to see where we are. We don't want to get down to a period of October or November and say, "Sorry, Mr. President, none of the 50 states passed the legislation and, therefore, we are going to have to cut off all the education going out." I don't think that would go over too well.

As long as you are all here from various states, let me go over where we feel you are as far as the Gun Free Schools Act. This is our view and perspective. In Illinois we feel there is an outstanding issue in the state legislation regarding whether it is for a full year or a school year. I guess the Illinois legislation says it is for one school year and the overall legislation says one year, not school year. We do have some issues that we do need to resolve with the people from Illinois. In Indiana the legislation appears to be generally consistent. In Kansas it is generally consistent. In Michigan there are a number of exceptions to the expulsion policy, and we need to take a look at the vast number of exceptions, but I think, aside from that, legislation is generally consistent. Minnesota is generally consistent. Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and Ohio are consistent.

South Dakota is inconsistent. It appears to be one of our problem states. The legislation is very clear on expulsion. We allow some leeway for the superintendent to make some exceptions to the expulsion policy. The South Dakota legislation uses the term *may expel* rather than *shall expel*. It also refers to students who intentionally bring guns to school. I have never really known how you prove someone intentionally brings a gun to school versus unintentionally. Although, I have heard that kids have had guns in their bookbags that they knew nothing about.

Aside from basically holding you responsible for this and other pieces of legislation, we are going to ask for your support. I know you are going to say, "That is a hell of thing to say after cutting our money. They are asking us to comply with the law and now they want our help." We do want your help and this is not with the legislation or financing. This is totally in a different area. I want to talk for a minute about a youth strategy that we are putting together. It is a high priority of the Health and Human Services Department of Education and the administration in general. The Food and Drug Administration on August 11 issued what is called an NPRM (Notice to Propose Rule Making). This is not a piece of legislation. This is a proposed rule that is aimed at curtailing smoking among youth. I want to be very clear here that we are not talking about kids over 18. We are talking about youth and those kids under 18. We are trying to do everything in our

power to ensure that we can prevent these kids from smoking. We feel that not only is it in some ways related to future drug use, but I think in a larger sense it is a health issue, and we know that an overwhelming majority of adults of this country who are current smokers started smoking before they were 18 years old.

If these cuts are implemented, it does not mean that you can do nothing. Reduction of funds does not mean reduction of responsibilities.

This proposed rule focuses on everything from restraints on advertising—no more advertising in magazines that focus on a predominantly youthful population—to restraints on the sale of the types of cigarettes—single cigarettes, packs of less than 20. We want to move out vending machines for the public. There are a whole series of rules that are being proposed. I want you all to be aware of that. I want you to basically take a look at the NPRM and make your views known. I am not going to tell you what your views should be, but I do feel that we have a responsibility to at least make our views known. This is not only a priority of the White House, but a priority of each of the agencies, because we do feel that this is an issue that we must address.

I could go on and on with where we are going and what we are doing. I think the major issue that we are faced with is "Where is this program going to be in 1996 and 1997?" As I mentioned, the budget has been reduced by 60 percent. The battle is not over and in many ways is just beginning. The week of September 25, the full Senate will vote on the appropriations budget. This is the entire Department of Education budget. While there is a move to put some amendments on the floor of the Senate—and there is always a possibility of getting the budget amended on the floor—it is highly unlikely that you will have too many amendments. It just gets too cluttered up and most of the amendments are voted down.

It is very unlikely that the drug budget will change. What is very clear is that some people are saying that there is $400 million in the Safe and Drug Free Schools Budget based on the figures that came out of the Appropriations Subcommittee and the Appropriations Committee. There is a footnote there and the footnote says of the $400 million, $200 million is to be transferred to the Department of Health and Human Services, for what we are not sure. We are also not sure why. Nevertheless, there is $200 million for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and $200 million for Health and Human Services to do a lot of things that are rumored, but nothing that is in writing as of yet. The Senate will vote shortly thereafter, and maybe in October the House and the Senate will get together and try to come up with some resolution on where we are with the budget.

I think the major issue that we are faced with is "Where is this program going to be in 1996 and 1997?" As I mentioned, the budget has been reduced by 60 percent. The battle is not over and in many ways is just beginning.

Now what we are faced with is a House that has a figure of $200 million and a Senate that has a figure of $400 million with a footnote and will try to reconcile that. I don't think anybody knows where we are going to end up on this. We could end up with $200 million or we could end up with $400 million or even $300 million. I think those are the options. I don't believe we will go below $200 million, nor do I believe we will go above $400 million. The reason I am saying this is that maybe all the money will come over to the Department of Education and this is just me saying that it doesn't make sense to use the education appropriations process to send the Department of Health and Human Services any money. Maybe I am believing beyond belief that somebody will come to their senses and say, "Well, let's put money in the Health and Human Services budget

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for the Health and Human Services program." Then we will get to retain that money.

I for one ask, Where are we going to end up? Your guess is as good as mine. Not only do I not know where we are going to end up, I don't know when we are going to end up there. September 30 is the end of the fiscal year and that is when all the operational funds for administration and for other programs run out. It is highly unlikely that these budgets will be passed by September 30. Therefore, what we are faced with is either a close down of government—because there is no money to pay for employees and programs—or some agreement and consensus of moving forward. I think we are in a better position today than we were last week. There appears to be a consensus developing around the fact that it would be devastating to have the government shut down. I am not talking just about the Safe And Drug Free Schools Program; I am talking about Social Security, the Food and Drug Administration, the air traffic controllers, and all these things. It appears that there is more and more of a consensus growing around the short-term compromise and short-term efforts to keep government going until these budgets can be approved.

I for one ask. Where are we going to end up? Your guess is as good as mine. Not only do I not know where we are going to end up, I don't know when we are going to end up

The President is going to have some decisions to make. We all know that when you come in with a Senate budget that is at this level and a House budget that is this level, through a consensus process they try to reach the middle. Which means the overall education budget will probably go down from the high water mark to what is currently the Senate level. That will mean a reduction of over $1 billion in overall education funding. At that point in time the administration has to say, Is this what we really want? Is this where priorities are for education? Then somebody is going to make the decision about whether or not to veto that bill or to pass it with the strings or whatever the case may be.

There is a lot to be concerned about. On the other hand, I think there is a lot to be positive about and that is that there is great leadership in Washington.

That is an overview of where we are and where we are going. Much of it is gray. There are areas where none of us have ever really been before. I have been in government for many years and know that there are times when we have had to rely on continuing resolutions when there has been a lot of concern about what goes on. I think that in my 20-some odd years in the federal government this is probably the time when nobody really knows where we are going. There is a lot to be concerned about. On the other hand, I think there is a lot to be positive about and that is that there is great leadership in Washington. I don't say that tongue in cheek; I say that honestly. I believe we have probably the best Secretary in Education that we have ever had. We have some great leadership, and the other point of that is that leaders from the President on down are firmly committed to this program. I have never seen a program the size of $500 million receive as much attention as this one. You have the President visiting schools for the sole purpose of pushing this program. You have the First Lady inviting people into the White House to talk about this program. You have other Secretaries visiting schools the first and second week of September to promote education. Several of them focused on safe schools, disciplined schools, and drug-free schools. There is a firm commitment on the part of the administration and the leadership to ensure that this program and other programs designed to prevent some of the behaviors that we see every day are being maintained.

Unlearning Violence: Minnesota's Plan of Action

Under the 1994 Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, each state is required to set forth a comprehensive plan focusing on alcohol, drug, and violence prevention. The Minnesota Department of Education, Office of Community Collaboration, has released its plan, *Unlearning Violence*, as a guide for its schools and communities to help create environments that promote the emotional well-being and safety of all individuals. This plan was formulated from interviews and focus groups with over 600 Minnesota citizens, including youth who have been actively involved in prevention activities. Goals, challenges, and strategies were set forth as a result of these interviews, combined with an in-depth study of current research on the issues of prevention and promotion. Carol Sullivan, Violence Prevention Coordinator of the Minnesota Department of Education, and Cordelia Anderson, consultant, Sensibilities Inc., coordinated the efforts of participating citizens with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, the League of Women Voters, and *Minnesota Monthly Magazine*.

Prevention is not short-term and we cannot use quick-fix solutions to make the necessary changes in society.

Unlearning Violence begins with a vision of schools becoming an integral member of the community in which everyone works together in support of children and families. "Schools are viewed by students, parents, and community as friendly, accessible and a vibrant component of the social fabric . . . ."

The foundation of *Unlearning Violence* is based on 11 premises:

1. Promotion and prevention efforts must have a community focus. No two communities are alike. Each community knows what its challenges are and what it has as assets to support its children and community members.
2. Prevention and promotion efforts should continue throughout the life span.

   Prevention is not short-term and we cannot use quick-fix solutions to make the necessary changes in society. We must use long-term, research-based, comprehensive, multifaceted approaches.

"I think that one of the problems is that we've haven't really done a good job of defining violence. It [violence] can mean different things in different communities."

Connie Hofer, South Dakota Department of Education

Conference sponsors, Maxine Womble, Director of the Midwest Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities, and Dr. Sue Donielson, Iowa Department of Education.

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"We've never really focused on one communtiy to see what works. We've done things sporadically and it shouldn't be done that way."

Dom Schanandore, South Dakota Department of Education

3. Social problems are interrelated, and we must move past the tendency to focus on the "problem of the day." It is important that we recognize and address the connections between racism, poverty, chemical abuse, violence, teen pregnancy, lack of information regarding sexual health, prostitution, gangs, weapons, HIV/AIDS, child abuse, incest, and so forth.
4. Consequences for violent behavior must be clear and consistently enforced. We must teach children alternatives to violence as shaming and punitive methods may only exacerbate the actions we want to stop. Violence is a learned behavior and can be unlearned.
5. Violence is a public health issue. Public health campaigns to stop smoking, drinking and driving, and so forth have been successful.

Unlearning Violence begins with a vision of schools becoming an integral member of the community in which everyone works together in support of children and families.

It is imperative that we take the same stance in approaching the issue of violence in our schools and communities. It is also important that we use health data collection systems to understand the effect of violence on health.

6. We must stop placing academic needs in the school as our only priority. The social and emotional needs of children are equally important. We are living in a society that has experienced many demographic and economic changes in the past 10 years. These changes have affected our children tremendously. Children who are not getting their emotional needs fulfilled, and who are not feeling a sense of safety and security in their environments are going to have difficulty learning.
7. It is essential that we begin addressing the issue of racism. By allowing its perpetuation, we are promoting violence. The effects of racism are insidious, eroding a child's sense of self and hope. We must begin celebrating our diversity, which can become the strength of a school and community.
8. We must continue to focus strong prevention efforts toward eliminating the problem of child abuse and domestic violence. Children who experience violence within the family suffer long-term effects that often lead to maladaptive behavior in later life.
9. Children learn appropriate and inappropriate behavior in a variety of settings. Families, schools, faith communities, organized sports, and the media can either perpetuate violence or help to build a child's social skills and self-worth through role modeling, mentoring, and positive youth development. It is imperative that adults serve as role models and make a concerted effort to connect with children and become involved with their growth.

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10. We need better coordination of services at the state and community level. Those involved in providing services need to know how they interrelate with other services. Resources should be well publicized so that citizens can readily identify which services are available.

11. Each adult who comes into contact with a child must realize his or her potential for contributing to that child's emotional and psychological well-being. Most families do the best they can, but often cannot give their children all that they need to foster their emotional and psychological development. Children are deeply influenced by other sources of socialization including peers, media, and sports. It is imperative that adults serve as role models, reaching out to all children to provide the necessary bonding opportunities for the development of a self-affirming identity. It is up to each of us to take this responsibility in providing for children and youth.

The plan lists seven goals and the challenges in reaching these goals, followed with strategies to help schools and communities create environments conducive to the emotional well-being of children, youth, and adults.

The plan also includes proposed assessment and measurement instruments that will be used to measure student, school, and community behavior as well as perceptions of violence and/or safety. It lists Minnesota Department of Education's present violence prevention and promotion efforts and activities as well as proposed future efforts. Several of the many successful promotion and prevention programs presently in operation in the state are also featured, including violence prevention education programs in schools, community councils, at-risk youth grants, and planning and implementation projects that have resulted from collaborative grants.

For more information please contact Carol Sullivan at (612) 296-5830. To receive a copy of *Unlearning Violence,* contact Glenda Meixell at (612) 296-4081.

The seven goals and their challenges include:

1. Promotion: Develop the qualities children need to thrive.
2. Prevention: Create comprehensive prevention efforts for all learners.
3. Protection: Assure the protection of all K-12 students and staff.
4. Family partnerships: Strengthen the school parent/guardian educational connection.
5. Healthy climates: Provide positive school climates, environments, and cultures in which to work and learn.
6. Community focus: Assure a community focus to promotion and prevention efforts.
7. Social Norms: Change social norms to emphasize acceptable ways to solve problems.

Ed Virant, Omaha Public Schools and Karen Stevens, Nebraska State Department of Education, exchanged thoughts on violence prevention initiatives.

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Facing The Challenge

Throughout the United States, communities are being plagued with a host of problems. Our cities are besieged by poverty, economic decline, crime, racial tensions, gang activity, violence, and substandard housing. Rural communities are no longer immune to the problems and are also experiencing their share of difficulties with underemployment, changing demographics and economic structures, gang activity, youth alcoholism, violence, and teenage pregnancy. To the observer, it appears that our society is in great distress. These problems are interrelated and our children, families, schools, and communities are suffering the ill effects.

From the ashes of despair, however, there is a powerful glimmer of hope. Many communities are fighting back and rebuilding their schools, neighborhoods, and infrastructure. Children, youth, parents, schools, and community are joining together and forming strong coalitions. These communities are coming together and building on their assets—primarily the innate emotional health, resiliency and strength of each member, using his and her ability to be a contributing member of society.

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By forming a conceptual framework based upon research on resiliency, positive youth development, and protective factors, families, schools, and communities are becoming the core participants in improving their own lives and environments. There is an engaging synergy that occurs when people begin realizing that they have something positive to contribute while beginning to recognize the worth of those around them. When this happens, people move past shame—past the accompanying hopelessness, apathy and/or rage—into empowerment. Collaborations that focus on strengths, asset building, protective factors, and resiliency can create a synergy that allows children, youth, and adults to overcome great risk factors and thus grow into happy, self-affirming, and productive members of the community. Success stories about these kinds of community efforts are now beginning to surface.

In 1987, Roger Mills implemented the Health Realization Project in the Modello Housing Project in Dade County, Florida. With 65 percent of its residents using or selling drugs, the Modello Project was plagued with violence, school failure, and unemployment. The Health Realization approach, developed by Mills, a psychologist, operates from the belief that everyone is born resilient and has an innate healthy core of common sense, well-being, and self-esteem that they can use to rise above their situation. Pointing out that 75 percent of the children of alcoholics never develop drinking problems themselves, Mills says that in order to stamp out problems like violence and drug addiction, we should be nurturing the greatest strength that disenfranchised people have—their own bountiful survival skills. Through the implementation of an empowerment and parenting class, residents of the Modello Housing Project began coming together and looking at what they could do to change their lives. Within one year after this project was implemented, drug trafficking had decreased by 65 percent, delinquency and school failure were reduced by 75 percent, and substance abuse was cut in half.

In 1991 in Oakland, California, residents of the plagued Coliseum Garden Housing Project became involved in the Health Realization Project. At that time, Oakland's murder rate was the fourth highest in the nation. The murder rate at the Coliseum

Garden was 11 times higher, with one murder for every 208 residents. Gang members shot out streetlights and drove through the complex at top speed, shooting out of their car windows while residents lay on the floors of their apartments and prayed. The fire department refused to enter Coliseum Gardens without a police escort. Cab drivers and pizza deliverers refused to enter the project grounds. The handful of community members who became involved in the empowerment class began working with the Housing Authority police and social service agencies on community issues such as crime, gangs, parenting, and community development. As a result, the quality of living in Coliseum Gardens has improved tremendously.

Robert Linquanti, in Western Regional Center's publication *Using Community-Wide Collaboration to Foster Resiliency in Kids*, states, "Along with this clear emphasis to involve and empower families and communities to help themselves comes the need to build on capacities, skills and assets, rather than focus primarily on their deficits, weaknesses and problems." John Kretzmann and John McKnight have written a guide, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing Communities' Assets*, which helps communities rediscover and "map" out their assets as well as combine and mobilize these strengths to build more self-reliant and powerful environments. This guide was created from the lessons learned by the Neighborhood Innovations Network in Chicago as well as from studying successful community building initiatives across the country.

There are several projects similar to the Health Realization Project Neighborhood Innovations Network occurring in a variety of schools and communities throughout the United States. Large cities are implementing projects similar to the Health Realization model. Rural areas, on the other hand, are implementing projects that are based on similar theory, but more suited to meet the needs of their communities.

In the rural town of Sturgis, Michigan, a project was implemented in 1991 by Kent Roberts, Youth and Family Coordinator, and Jay Newman, Principal of Sturgis High School. By incorporating the research on assets and deficits conducted by Peter Bensen of the Search Institute, Kent Roberts began recruiting community members in an attempt to facilitate their involvement with the school. Using the philosophy that school and community are one, Sturgis opened the school to community members. Today at Sturgis High, parents and community members are part of the everyday activities in the school: Students are leading classes, senior citizens are pairing with high school students, youth are mentoring other kids, and parents are operating a parenting station.

Within the first year of implementing this innovative program, discipline referrals and drop-out rates decreased dramatically. Each student at Sturgis takes a leadership workshop before graduating

"People react by not managing their anger, but by revenge."

Dave Lee, North Dakota State Department of Public Instruction

from high school. Learning often takes place outside of the school through a variety of community activities and on-the-job training.

Kent Roberts speaks about the passion he feels for what is happening in Sturgis as a result of this innovative program: "These programs move beyond categorical funding. In every community there are people who can contribute. We are a partnership within ourselves. Do we have to carry a banner of substance abuse or violence? Why can't we carry the banner of people caring for people?"

This country has traditionally operated as a "problem-based" society through the use of reactive crisis management, by using category-based programs that focus on treating symptoms rather than root causes, and by using fragmented services that have oftentimes brought even more chaos to the lives of disenfranchised families. It has taken our society decades to realize that Band-Aids do not provide solutions. Simply preventing high risk behavior is not enough. We must make a paradigm shift from being a problem-focused society to one that operates from its assets and strengths, empowering every member of our society to become a self-affirming individual and a contributing member of the community. Children and youth must be actively involved in this process. They must be given the supports necessary to thrive and develop into autonomous adults.

Karen Pittman warns that the risk reduction focus of many of our collaborative efforts may be inadequate: "Preventing high risk behaviors is not enough to ensure that youth are ready to assume the responsibilities and challenges of adulthood. Moreover, there is increasing evidence that the high risk behaviors that have garnered so much public and political concern cannot be reduced without addressing the broader and more positive issue of youth development. . . . Those youth who have skills and goals are much less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors than those who lack these skills and supports" (Pittman, 1992).

Bonnie Benard, in a synthesis of the resiliency literature, describes three key protective factors found in families, schools, and communities that foster resilient children:

1. Having a caring and supportive relationship with at least one person.
2. Communicating consistently clear, high expectations to the child.
3. Providing ample opportunities for the child to participate in and contribute meaningfully to his or her social environment.

Research indicates that these protective factors foster resiliency in children. A resilient child, according to Benard, is one who is socially competent, with problem-solving skills and a sense of his or her own autonomy, purpose, and future. Psychological research indicates that shame-based identity formation—a result of inadequate parenting and disrupted bonding—is at the root of the occurrence of violence and a host of other maladaptive behaviors (Kaufman, 1983; Mason, 1985; Sullivan, 1985).

By providing children with the necessary protective factors—thus promoting self-esteem and autonomy—we will make the paradigm shift necessary to reverse the environment of social problems that we are presently experiencing. Through the implementation of family, school, and community collaboratives that are based on resiliency and positive youth development research, we can change the fabric of our society. In lieu of current funding shortages, it is up to each of us to help create the hope and synergy necessary to facilitate the ability of schools and communities to provide the nurturing and ingredients necessary to allow each child and adult to thrive and reach her or his full potential. We must not lose sight of the fact that we know what has to be accomplished, nor the hope and will to succeed.

Action Planning Session

Each state participating in the "Safe Schools Within Safe Communities" regional seminar brought a team, if possible, so that they could take the first step towards developing a violence prevention action plan for their state. While the time available for the development of the plans was brief, states were able to identify some of their key issues, goals, and objectives. The outcomes are summarized in the following section.

Action Plan Teams:

Iowa

Participants: David Wright, Iowa Department of Education
Deb Synhorst, Iowa Department of Public Health
Jan Rose, Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse
Jim Tyson, Iowa Department of Education
Mary Sloan, Northwest Iowa Alcoholism and Drug Treatment Unit

Issue: There is a lack of respect for human relationships by both youth and adults.

Goal: To increase the skills and commitment for positive human relationships

Objective: The representatives of the Prevention and Education Committee will develop an action plan for positive human relations. This committee will then present an action plan to the Governor's appointed Prevention and Education Council. Plans will be implemented in each department for compiling and listing resources, and for developing materials and providing technical assistance, as well as developing measurable outcomes. Each state department will then have an action plan that is a collaborative effort with all other departments.

Missouri

Participants: Betty Lohraf, Missouri Department of Education
Sandy Nichols, Missouri Department of Education
Janet McLelland, Missouri Department of Education

Issue: There is presently no unified effort in the state of Missouri focusing on the prevention of violence.

Goal: To have a coordinated state effort focusing on violence prevention efforts

Objective: The Prevention and Education Planning Committee will contact at least three primary individuals in other state agencies to begin initial planning.

Michigan

Participants: Judith Pasquarella, Office of Drug Control Policy
Karen Quinn, Governor's Office

Issue: The state lacks local level coordination and collaboration.

Goal: To educate and inform state policymakers on the need for coordination of violence prevention initiatives

Objective: To complete a local and statewide needs assessment. This assessment will be used to develop an action plan and framework that will be distributed to policymakers and decisionmakers throughout state agencies.

Minnesota

Participants: Carol Sullivan, Minnesota Department of Education
Carol Thomas, Minnesota Department of Education
Andrea Mowrey, Minnesota Attorney General's Office
Don Streufert, Center for Reducing Rural Violence

Issue: Although there are multiple prevention initiatives throughout the state of Minnesota, there is still a need for more effective collaboration and knowledge of available resources and support.

Goal: To increase "community" throughout the state of Minnesota using the state plan, *Unlearning Violence,* as a keystone

Objective: To identify the processes necessary to make resources more available to communities to decrease barriers. A discussion group of state, local, and nonprofit agencies and community members involved in the prevention movement will be organized to brainstorm ideas on how to increase collaborative efforts and interconnect current efforts.

Nebraska

Participants: Karen Stevens, State Department of Education
Ed Virant, Omaha Public Schools

Issue: Specific recommendations are necessary for fulfillment of the state plan, PACT.

Goal: To make people aware that the state plan exists and to develop strategies for statewide implementation

Objectives: Expand statewide drug-free training to include violence prevention strategies. Identify funding sources and develop concept papers to fund a truancy survey as well as another on juvenile justice issues. An action plan that includes a best practices list will be developed and disseminated to school districts.

North Dakota

Participants: Dave Lee, State Department of Public Instruction

Ron Pfaff, State Department of Public Instruction

Barbara Norby, North Dakota School Board

Issue: There is a need to bring agencies together to have a better impact on prevention services and programs.

Goal: To have agencies collaborate in improving the coordination of services for ATOD and violence prevention

Objective: Representatives of all state agencies will meet to improve the delivery of prevention services.

Ohio

Participant: Judy Airhart, Ohio Department of Education

Issue: There is a need to incorporate the concept of asset development into various agencies.

Goal: To have the Strategic Planning Commitee develop a framework to guide schools and communities in creating programs focusing on positive youth development

Objectives: Eighteen Ohio agencies and community and school organizations are developing an action plan to coordinate the many federal, state, and local prevention efforts. This action plan includes:

1. Assessing and monitoring problems over time.
2. Establishing firm, fair, consistent, and effective policies.
3. Implementing comprehensive prevention and education programs.
4. Providing ongoing training for school staff.
5. Providing parent involvement and training.
6. Encouraging local partnerships between schools, parents, business, law enforcement, and other community entities.

This comprehensive prevention and eduction framework will serve as a guide for schools and communities.

South Dakota

Participants: Don Schanandore, Department of Education and Cultural Affairs

Wanda Fergen, South Dakota Attorney General's Task Force on Drugs

Connie Hofer, State Department of Human Services, Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Issue: There is a lack of data regarding incidents of violence. Communities are very resistant to change.

Goal: To have state departments collaborate so that each knows what the other is doing

Objective: Since South Dakota is going through a reorganization in most departments and has a new Governor and an acting Secretary of Education, it is difficult to determine what direction will be taken in the future regarding violence prevention efforts.

Wisconsin

Participants: Steve Fernan, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Gary Nelson, Department of Health & Social Services

Sean Mulhern, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Jackie Schoening, Cooperative Educational Services Agency #6

Lisa Taylor, Department of Justice

Issue: There is fragmentation and discontinuity of strategies to address violent behavior, and to a lesser extent, a lack of information.

Goal: To develop a strategy to continuously share information on issues related to violence and common or coordinated strategies to address these issues

Objectives: The first objective is to expand the legislatively charged statewide gang prevention council to look at other issues related to violence, including a broader definition of violence for agencies that are addressing these issues. A second objective would be to share data on violence as well as to identify the current challenges and strategies in prevention. A third objective is to develop a clearinghouse on violence prevention and intervention.

A Violence Prevention Resource Primer

For additional information and resources, call or write:

Community Action and Gang Prevention Programs

Center for Community Change
1000 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 342-0519

Community Youth Gang Services, Inc.
144 South Fetterly Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90022
(213) 266-4264

Family and Youth Services Bureau
Administration on Children, Youth, and Families
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
(202) 205-8102

Youth Development Programs

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America
230 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 567-7000

Boys and Girls Clubs of America
Government Relations Office
600 East Jefferson Street
Suite 203
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 251-6676

Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
Academy for Educational Development
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW
9th Floor
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 884-8000

National Resource Center for Youth Services
202 West Eighth
Tulsa, OK 74119-1419
(918) 585-2986

Efficacy Institute
128 Spring Street
Lexington, MA 02173
(617) 862-4390

Gun Violence

Center to Prevent Handgun Violence
1225 Eye Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 289-7319

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence/The Educational Fund to End Handgun Violence (Educational Arm)
100 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002-5626
(202) 544-7190

Child Abuse and Safety Rights

National Council on Child Abuse and Family Violence
1155 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 429-6695
(800) 222-2000 National Family Violence HelpLine

Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787

Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention
Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
Department F
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
(800) 638-8736

Save Our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD)
2441 West Grand Boulevard
Detroit, MI 48208
(313) 361-5200

School Safety

National School Safety Center
4165 Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Suite 290
Westlake Village, CA 91362
(805) 373-9977

Safe Schools Coalition, Inc.
5351 Gulf Drive
P.O. Box 1338, Department S36
Holmes Beach, FL 34218-1338
(800) 537-4903

School Mediation Associates
134 Standish Road
Watertown, MA 02172
(617) 876-6074

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation

Children's Creative Response to Conflict
P.O. Box 271
521 North Broadway
Nyack, NY 10960
(914) 353-1796

Resolving Conflict Creatively Program National Center
Educators for Social Responsibility
163 Third Avenue, #103
New York, NY 10003
(212) 387-0225

Second Step
Committee for Children
2203 Airport Way South
Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98134-2027
(206) 343-1223

I Can Problem Solve (ICPS)
Mental Health Association of Illinois
150 North Wacker Drive
Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 368-9070

Moral Courage
c/o Harrington Elementary
2401 East 37th Avenue
Denver, CO 80205
(303) 333-4293

Peace Education Foundation
1900 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, FL 33132
(305) 576-5075

Scared or Prepared
Lee Canter & Associates
1307 Colorado Avenue
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2113
(800) 733-1711

Project YES! Gang Violence and Drug Prevention Curriculum
Orange County Department of Education
Media Services
200 Kalmus Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626-9050
(714) 966-4341

Violence Prevention Curriculm for Adolescents
Education Development Center
55 Chapel Street
Suite 24
Newton, MA 02160
(617) 969-7100

Opinions expressed in the commentaries do not necessarily reflect the view of NCREL staff or board. Facts and ideas presented in NCREL's *Policy Briefs* are intended to survey a current issue and not to advocate a particular position.

Policy Briefs

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